

VZCZCXRO8182
PP RUEHPA
DE RUEHUJA #0039 0141615
ZNY CCCCC ZZH
P 141615Z JAN 10 ZDK
FM AMEMBASSY ABUJA
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 8010
INFO RUEHZK/ECOWAS COLLECTIVE
RUEHSA/AMEMBASSY PRETORIA 2131
RUEHOS/AMCONSUL LAGOS 2658
RHMFISS/HQ USAFRICOM STUTTGART GE
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHINGTON DC
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHINGTON DC
RUEKDIA/DIA WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L ABUJA 000039

SIPDIS

STATE FOR AF/FO, AF/W, AF/RSA, DRL, INR/AA;
STATE PLEASE PASS TO DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY;
HOMELAND SECURITY FOR DEPUTY SECRETARY, TSA, OIA

E.O. 12958: DECL: 01/05/2020
TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [PTER](#) [ASEC](#) [PINR](#) [NI](#)
SUBJECT: TSA DEMARCHE ON NEW AIR PASSENGER SCREENING RULES

REF: A. STATE 01187
[B.](#) ABUJA 00020
[C.](#) ABUJA 00038

Classified By: Political Counselor James P. McAnulty
for reasons in sections 1.4 (b) and (d).

DECEMBER 25 IS "WAKE-UP" CALL

[1.](#) (C) Ambassador delivered Transportation Security Administration (TSA) demarche (ref A) January 12 to Foreign Minister Chief Ojo Maduekwe, who characterized the December 25 attempted bombing of a U.S. commercial aircraft as a "wake-up" call for Nigeria. Though Maduekwe initially smirked when the Ambassador described the USG's "close relationship" with the GON, his reaction during the demarche turned positive. He simply responded, "fair enough." Maduekwe remarked that the decision had caused an "initial shock" and "extreme pain" to Nigerians, but the GON is ready "to move beyond that."

[2.](#) (C) The Ambassador also provided a copy of the Embassy's press statement thanking Nigerians for their expressions of sympathy and outreach since December 25. Maduekwe remarked that citizens of both countries were fortunate that suspect Umar Farouk Abdulmutallab had not succeeded. He agreed that both countries should collaborate more closely on international terrorism issues. He recommended focusing on bilateral cooperation, information sharing, and enhanced security measures.

NSA STILL AGAINST AIR MARSHALS

[3.](#) (C) On the issue of USG air marshals traveling on international commercial flights between Nigeria and the U.S., Maduekwe stated that both he and the Attorney General "were on board" with the proposed Memorandum of Understanding. He noted, however, that "a few bureaucratic challenges" remained prior to final implementation. Foreign Ministry (MFA) Deputy Director for North and Central America Rabiou Shehu previously indicated to EconCouns that the agreement would be "approved without delay," but noted that the National Security Advisor (NSA) remained a "sticking point." (See septels on Deputy Secretary Lute's meeting with Foreign Minister and NSA, and ref C on Ambassador's conversation with Foreign Minister January 10).

COMMENT

¶4. (C) Foreign Minister Maduekwe displayed a noticeably more constructive tone during the demarche than he had previously exhibited when he convoked the Ambassador January 5 to express his profound consternation over the listing of Nigeria as a TSA "country of interest" (ref B). Since then, after admitting that he does not receive security or intelligence briefings, the Foreign Minister now appears to be willing to entertain that there may be other links in Nigeria with outside extremists and that the current bombing suspect has revealed a greater problem in the country (ref C). Despite this, the USG still faces an uphill battle and resentment from many Nigerians on the TSA listing. Most Nigerian senior government officials have yet to come to terms or are willing to acknowledge that there are links to outside extremist groups operating in Nigeria. END COMMENT.

¶5. (U) Embassy coordinated this telegram with ConGen Lagos.

¶6. (SBU) Given Mission IT infrastructure problems, ref A demarche request was only received on January 11 in Mission's Qdemarche request was only received on January 11 in Mission's telegram traffic system.

SANDERS